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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Fifty-third session
Agenda item 9

FURTHER PROMOTION AND ENCOURAGEMENT OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING THE QUESTION OF THE PROGRAMME AND METHODS OF WORK OF THE COMMISSION

Afghanistan*, Argentina, Australia*, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, Croatia*, Cyprus*, Denmark, Dominican Republic, France, Germany, Greece*, Haiti*, Hungary*, Ireland, Italy, Madagascar*, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Norway*, Poland*, Portugal*, Republic of Korea, Romania*, Russian Federation, Slovakia*, Spain*, Sweden*, Switzerland*, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, Tunisia* and Ukraine: draft resolution

1997/... Development of public information activities in the field of human rights, including the World Public Information Campaign for Human Rights

The Commission on Human Rights,

Reaffirming that activities to improve public knowledge in the field of human rights are essential to the fulfilment of the principles and purposes of the United Nations set out in Article 1, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, and that carefully designed programmes of teaching, education and information are essential to the achievement of lasting respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms,

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* In accordance with rule 69, para. 3, of the rules of procedure of the functional commissions of the Economic and Social Council.

Recalling previous General Assembly and its own resolutions on this subject,

Recognizing the significant effect of United Nations initiatives on public information activities in the field of human rights, in particular those undertaken by the High Commissioner for Human Rights,

Taking note of the valuable role that non-governmental organizations can play in this endeavour,

Believing that the World Public Information Campaign for Human Rights is a valuable complement to the activities of the United Nations aimed at the further promotion and protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, and recalling the importance attached by the World Conference on Human Rights to strengthening the World Campaign,

1. Takes note with appreciation of the report of the Secretary-General on the development of public information activities in the field of human rights, including the World Public Information Campaign for Human Rights (E/CN.4/1997/36), which contains, inter alia, a comprehensive review of the relevant programmes of information and publication undertaken by the High Commissioner and by the Department of Public Information;

2. Appreciates the measures taken by the Department of Public Information and the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights to ensure the further production and effective dissemination of human rights information materials in regional and local languages, in close cooperation with regional, national and local organizations as well as with Governments, in particular as a component of the technical assistance projects in the field of human rights;

3. Urges the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights and the Department of Public Information to cooperate closely in the realization of the information and publication programmes in the field of human rights, including the implementation of the new information strategy and the relevant preparatory work for the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

4. Encourages the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights to continue the development of training courses and materials such as targeted training manuals for professional audiences, referred to in the report of the Secretary-General;

5. Welcomes the establishment of an Internet site by the High Commissioner for Human Rights and encourages the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights to make available in a timely fashion on the website United Nations documents and publications as well as databases for the promotion of human rights, in the official languages of the United Nations, and encourages the efforts of the Department of Public Information with respect to computer-accessible information on human rights;

6. Urges the Department of Public Information, in cooperation with the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights, to utilize fully and effectively United Nations information centres for the purpose of disseminating, within their designated areas of activity, basic information and reference materials on human rights and fundamental freedoms, in the official languages of the United Nations;

7. Urges the Department of Public Information to produce, in cooperation with the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights, information material, in particular audio-visual material, on all aspects of human rights in connection with the World Public Information Campaign for Human Rights, the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education;

8. Requests the Secretary-General to take advantage as much as possible of the collaboration of non-governmental organizations in the implementation of the World Public Information Campaign, in the preparation of public information activities for the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and in the activities relating to the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education;

9. Encourages all Member States to make special efforts to provide, facilitate and promote publicity for the activities of the United Nations in the field of human rights, including considering the creation of national committees for the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and for the United Nations Decade for Human Rights Education, to accord priority to the dissemination in their respective national and local languages of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenants on Human Rights and other international instruments and to provide information and education on the practical ways in which the rights and freedoms enjoyed under these instruments can be exercised;

10. Encourages all Member States to develop specific programmes and strategies for ensuring the widest human rights education and dissemination of public information and, in drawing up national action plans for the promotion and protection of human rights, to include broad-based education and public information programmes on human rights and to implement a gender perspective in accordance with the recommendations adopted by the World Conference on Human Rights and the Fourth World Conference on Women;

11. Calls upon the High Commissioner for Human Rights to coordinate and harmonize human rights information strategies within the United Nations system, in close cooperation with all relevant United Nations agencies and bodies;

12. Requests the Secretary-General to make available adequate resources from within the regular budget of the United Nations in order to allow the High Commissioner/Centre for Human Rights and the Department of Public Information to implement fully their expanded publications programme;

13. Also requests the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission, at its fifty-fifth session, a report on public information activities, with special emphasis on the activities relating to the World Public Information Campaign for Human Rights and those for the fiftieth anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, including information on expenditures incurred in the biennium 1996-1997 and those envisaged for the biennium 1998-1999;

14. Decides to continue its consideration of the question at its fifty-fifth session under the agenda item entitled "Further promotion and encouragement of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the question of the programme and methods of work of the Commission".

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